

Despite hurricane Ivan, which hit Alabama's Gulf Coast on September 16 and caused extensive property and tree damage, 2004 was a very good crop year. Ivan took its toll on many of the more mature **cotton** fields in the southwestern part of the state blowing much of the cotton lint to the ground. However, for the state as a whole, the effect was minimal and estimated yield fell only slightly below last year. Yield was 729 pounds of lint per acre compared to 772 pounds per acre the previous year and the ten year average of 607 pounds per acre. A few **corn** fields were not harvested before Ivan struck and were completely destroyed. Overall, however, Alabama posted a record corn yield of 123 bushels per acre. The ten year average is 88 bushels per acre. Production came in at 23,985,000 bushels, 805,000 bushels more than in 2003. Except for delaying harvest in some fields, the hurricane had little effect on the **peanut** crop. The major portion of the peanut crop is grown in the southeastern part of the state, but in recent years more and more acres have been planted in the southwestern area where peanut production increased from 21 percent of the total in 2003 to 37 percent this year. Production came to 557.2 million pounds and yield was 2,800 pounds per acre. This was 50 pounds per acre above 2003, 602 pounds per acre more than the ten year average but down from the record of 2,960 pounds per acre set in 1984. While some **soybean** fields were blown down by hurricane Ivan, the rains were a help to younger soybeans. Some soybeans molded in the field due to wet weather late in the harvest season. Total soybean production, at 6.65 million bushels, was up from the previous year while the yield of 35 bushels per acre was one bushel below the 2003 record yield of 36 bushels per acre. The ten year average is 26 bushels per acre. **Hay** fields received sufficient rain and condition averaged 60 percent good to excellent through the growing season. Yield, at 2.7 tons per acre tied the record yield set in 1994; it is up 0.1 ton per acre from the 2003 yield and 0.4 ton per acre above the ten year average yield. As in 2003, excessive moisture caused much of this year's **Irish Potato** crop to rot and go unharvested. A few growers did not plant this year due to poor prices. Planted area was down 700 acres from last year with only 1,300 acres harvested of the 2,300 acres planted. Yield is 175 cwt. per acre, 10 cwt. per acre below the 2003 yield but 10 cwt. per acre above the ten year average. Of the 2,800 acres of **sweet potatoes** planted, 2,300 acres were harvested. Some fields were not harvested due to wet weather and excessive weed growth. The average yield, at 165 cwt. per acre, was 25 cwt. per acre less than last year's 190 cwt. per acre and 1cwt. per acre less than the ten year average. **Winter Wheat** yield was 48 bushels per acre, 6 bushels above 2003 and 6 bushels below the 2000 record yield.

Normal Crop Progress

Crop	Planting Begins	Planting Ends	Harvest Begins	Harvest Ends
Corn	Mid-March	Early June	Late July	Early Nov
Cotton	Early April	Mid-June	Mid-September	Mid-December
Hay, first Cutting	---	---	Early May	Mid-July
Peaches	---	---	Mid-May	Mid-July
Peanuts	Late April	Mid-June	Early September	Early November
Pecans	---	---	Early October	Mid-December
Spring Potatoes	Mid-January	Mid-March	Early May	Early July
Summer Potatoes	Early March	Early April	Early July	Late August
Sweet Potatoes (South)	Mid-March	Late June	Mid-July	Early-November
Sweet Potatoes (North)	Mid-May	Early July	Mid-September	Late October
Soybeans	Late April	Early July	Late September	Mid-December
Wheat	Early October	Late-November	Mid-May	Mid-July